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SUPERMAN IN ACTION

COMICS

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AUTHORITY



ROGER STERN
BOB McLEOD
BRETT BREEDING

THE DAILY PLANET
BUILDING. 8:57 A.M.

BING!

OH!
CLARK...
WHAT--?

SUPERMAN

Created by
JERRY SEIBEL &
JOE SHUSTER

"SO, LOVELY ROSE!
TELL HER THAT WASTES
HER TIME AND ME
THAT NOW SHE KNOWS,
WHEN I RESEMBLE
HER TO THEE,
HOW SWEET AND FAIR
SHE SEEMS TO BE."

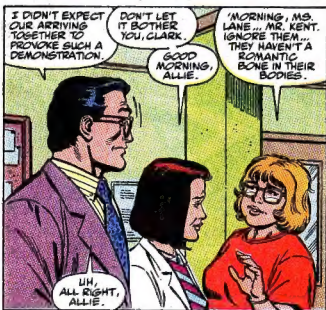
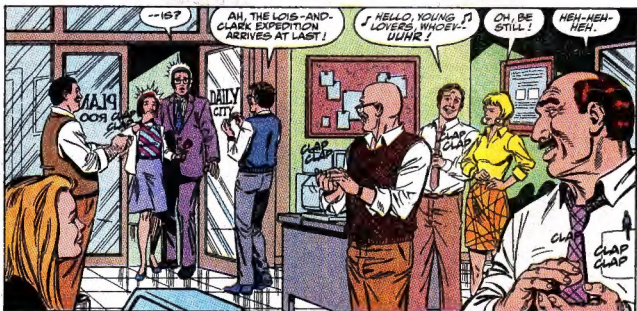
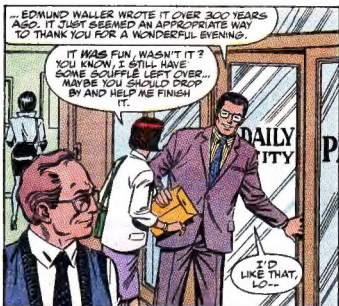
THE
DAILY
PLANET
IS GOOD
NEWS

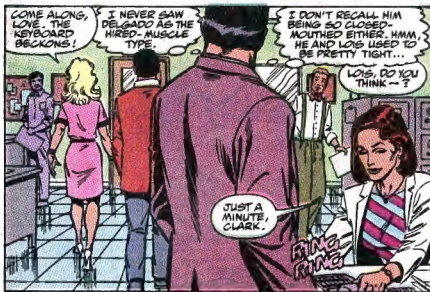
WHO SAYS
ROMANCE
IS DEAD?

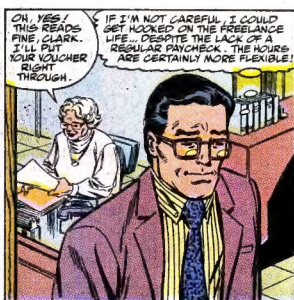
"Love & DEATH"

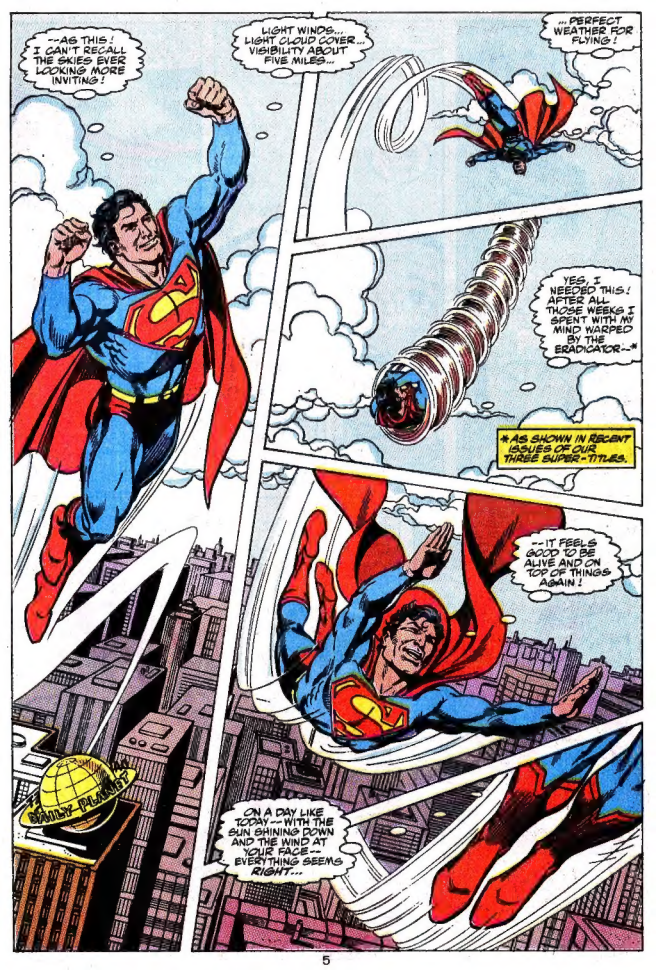
ROGER STERN • BRETT BREEDING • BILL OAKLEY • GLENN WHITMORE • JON PETERSON • MIKE CARLIN
WRITER • FINISHER/INKER • LETTERER • COLORIST • ASSOCIATE • EDITOR
~ AND A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MAN-OF-ACTION: BOB McLEOD • BREAKDOWN PENCILLER ~

ACTION COMICS 653 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ACTION COMICS, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate \$9.00, Canada \$14.00, all other foreign \$21.00. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1990 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017 (212) 949-0850. Printed in U.S.A.
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--AS THIS!
I CAN'T RECALL
THE SKIES EVER
LOOKING MORE
INVITING!

LIGHT WINDS...
LIGHT CLOUD COVER...
VISIBILITY ABOUT
FIVE MILES...

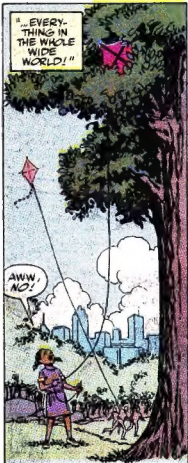
...PERFECT
WEATHER FOR
FLYING!

YES, I
NEEDED THIS!
AFTER ALL
THOSE WEEKS I
SPENT WITH MY
MIND WARPED
BY THE
ERADICATOR--

*AS SHOWN IN RECENT
ISSUES OF OUR
THREE SUPER-TITLES.

--IT FEELS
GOOD TO BE
ALIVE AND ON
TOP OF THINGS
AGAIN!

ON A DAY LIKE
TODAY--WITH THE
SUN SHINING DOWN
AND THE WIND AT
YOUR FACE--
EVERYTHING SEEMS
RIGHT...



"...EVERY-
THING IN
THE WHOLE
WIDE
WORLD!"

AWW,
NO!



DARN
KITE!

DARN
TREE!

DARN,
DARN,
DARN!

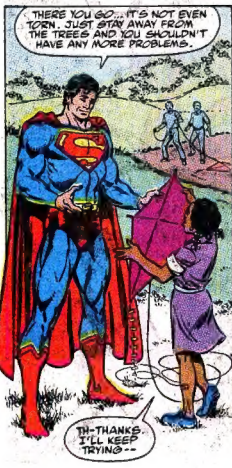


EASY
NOW...



...THERE'S NO SENSE IN
GETTING MAD AT A KITE
OR A TREE! THEY'RE
NOT AT FAULT!

S-SUPERMAN!



THERE YOU GO... IT'S NOT EVEN
TORN. JUST STAY AWAY FROM
THE TREES AND YOU SHOULDN'T
HAVE ANY MORE PROBLEMS.

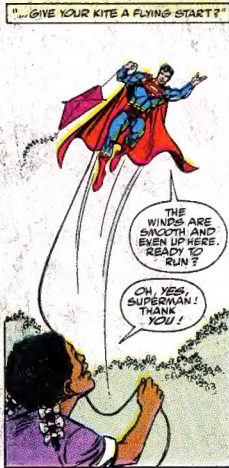
TH-THANKS.
I'LL KEEP
TRYING--



--BUT IT'S NOT EASY--
NOT MUCH BREEZE
CLOSE TO THE GROUND,
AND MY BROTHERS
WON'T HELP ME.

AH, I
SEE!

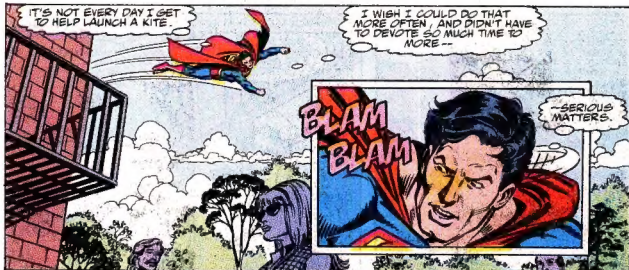
THAT
HARDLY
SEEMS FAIR.
HOW ABOUT
IF I...

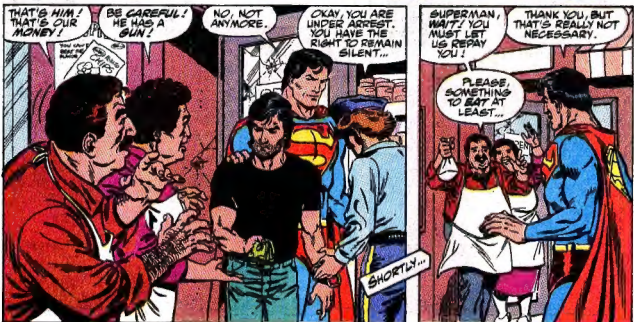
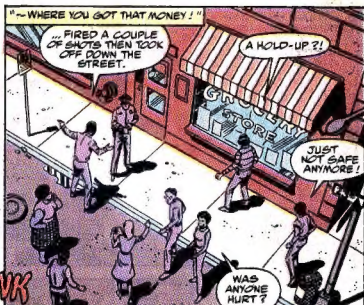
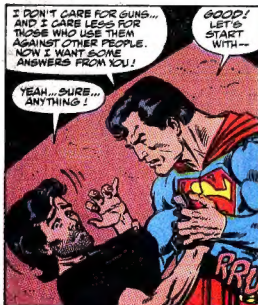


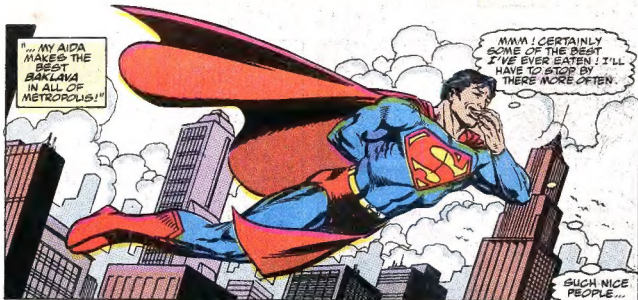
"...GIVE YOUR KITE A FLYING START?"

THE
WINDS ARE
SMOOTH AND
EVEN UP HERE.
READY TO
RUN?

OH, YES,
SUPERMAN!
THANK
YOU!







"... MY AIDA
MAKES THE
BEST
BAKLAVA
IN ALL OF
METROPOLIS!"

MAMA! CERTAINLY
SOME OF THE BEST
I'VE EVER EATEN! I'LL
HAVE TO STOP BY
THERE MORE OFTEN.

SUCH NICE
PEOPLE...



...I'M GLAD THEY
WEREN'T INJURED IN
THAT ROBBERY!

FROM WHAT THAT
OFFICER SAID, THE
HOLD-UP MAN HAD A
LONG LIST OF PRIOR
ARRESTS-- MOST OF
THEM DRUG RELATED.



IS THERE ANY
PLACE LEFT ON
EARTH THAT
HASN'T BEEN
AFFECTED BY
DRUG ABUSE?

THE PROBLEM
SEEMS UNENDING! I
KNOW I CAN'T SOLVE
IT... NOT ALONE!



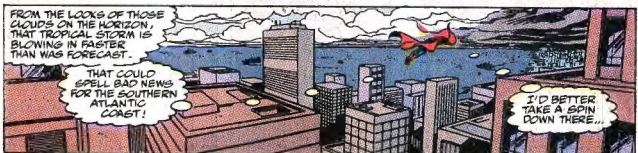
SOMETHING MUST BE
DONE TO IMPROVE THE
QUALITY OF LIFE, SO
THAT MORE PEOPLE
WON'T ABUSE DRUGS
IN THE FIRST PLACE.

AND IF ONLY THERE
WAS A WAY TO REACH
MORE PEOPLE WITH THE
PLAIN UNVARNISHED TRUTH
ABOUT THE MISERY DRUGS
CAN CAUSE-- NO PREACH-
ING, NO SCARE STORIES,
JUST THE FACTS!



THERE'S A JOB THAT
CLARK KENT COULD
HANDLE BETTER THAN
SUPERMAN... IF I STILL
HAD MY DAILY COLUMN.
PERHAPS--

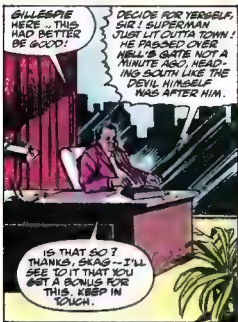
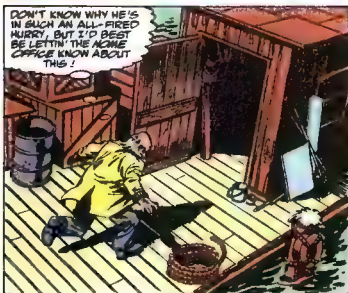
EH, WHAT'S THIS?

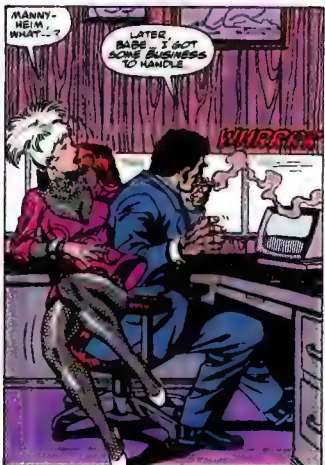


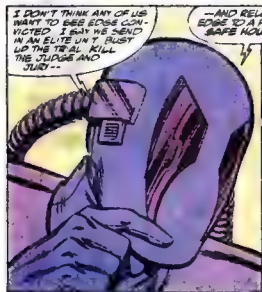
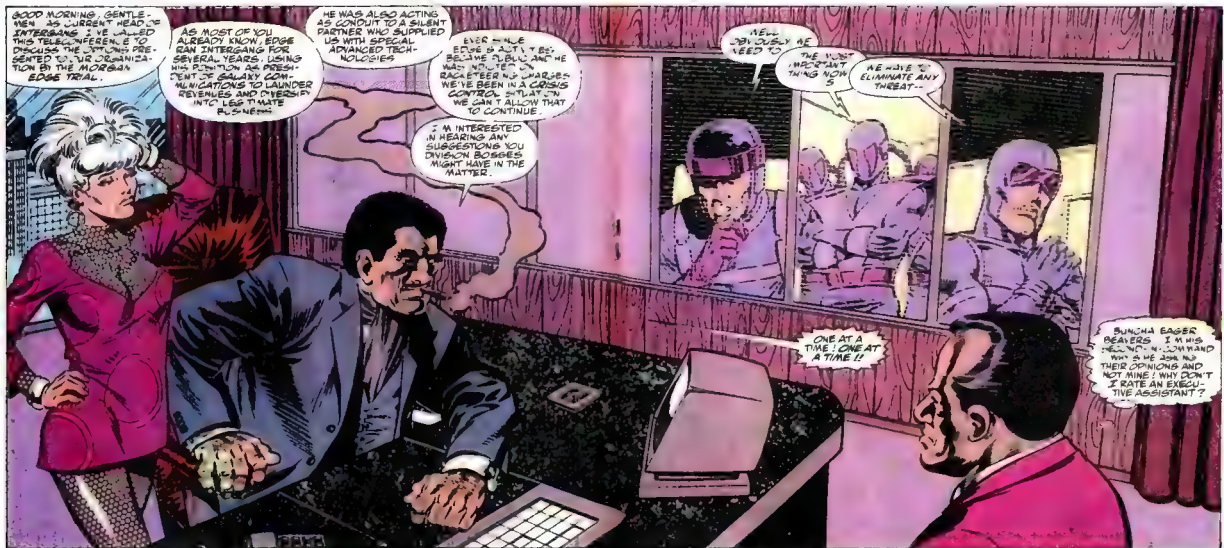
FROM THE LOOKS OF THOSE
CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON,
THAT TROPICAL STORM IS
BLOWING IN FASTER
THAN WAS FORECAST.

THAT COULD
SPELL BAD NEWS
FOR THE SOUTHERN
ATLANTIC
COAST!

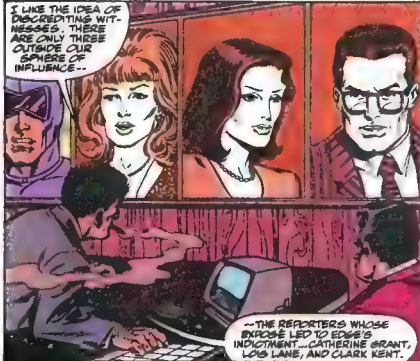
I'D BETTER
TAKE A SPIN
DOWN THERE...







I LIKE THE IDEA OF DISCREDITING WITNESSES. THERE ARE ONLY THREE OUTSIDE OUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE--



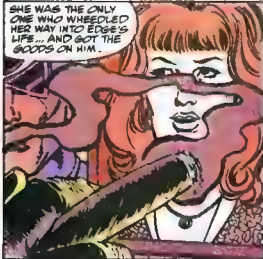
--THE REPORTERS WHOSE EXPOSÉ LED TO EDGE'S INDICTMENT... CATHERINE GRANT, LOS LANE, AND CLARK KENT.

LANE ONLY GOT INVOLVED WITH THE EXPOSÉ AFTER KENT HAD SOME SORT OF ACCIDENT WHICH EVENTUALLY GAVE HIM A CASE OF AMNESIA! EDGE'S LAWYER WOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE TRASHING THEIR TESTIMONY.



GRANT IS THE MAIN FLY IN THE OINTMENT.

SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO WHEELED HER WAY INTO EDGE'S LIFE... AND GOT THE GOODS ON HIM.



I WANT HER TAKEN ALIVE! AND I WANT IT DONE RIGHT--

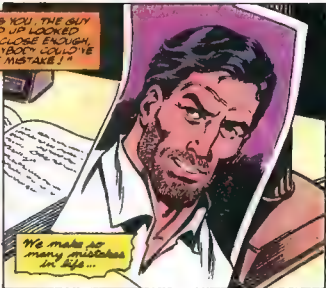


--NOT LIKE THE ATTEMPTED HIT ON KENT THAT YOU WALL-CRAWLERS BOTCHED!

HEY, WE WERE TOLD TO SECURE KENT'S APARTMENT AND WAIT FOR HIM TO COME HOME-- AND THAT'S WHAT WE DID!

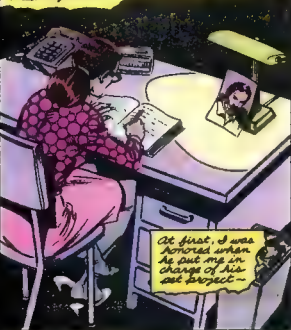


"I'M TELLING YOU, THE GUY WHO SHOWED UP LOOKED LIKE KENT... CLOSE ENOUGH, ANYWAY! ANYBODY COULD'VE MADE THAT MISTAKE!"



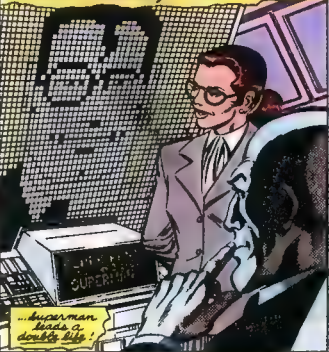
We make so many mistakes in life...

...my biggest one was going to work for Luthor's computer division. It was a promising career, until I was noticed by Lex Luthor himself. He told me that he liked my work.



At first, I was honored when he put me in charge of his pet project...

--Compiling and analyzing data on those most associated with Superman. Eventually, my work uncovered an astounding secret...



...Superman hides a double life!

But Luthor could not believe that a man of such power would willingly hide behind a facade of normality.



YOU HAVE FAILED ME, AMANDA! THIS CONCLUSION IS LITTERALLY USELESS. REMOVE IT FROM MY COMPUTERS AT ONCE!

AND THEN REMOVE YOURSELF!

That monster used me, and then threw me away! His influence is so pervasive that I found myself black-listed, unable to find work.

In time, I actually began to doubt my own findings. I knew I had to prove the secret of Superman's identity to myself.



I hired Matt Stockton to help me. As a detective, he was somewhat disreputable, but he was all I could afford. He did his best to help me...

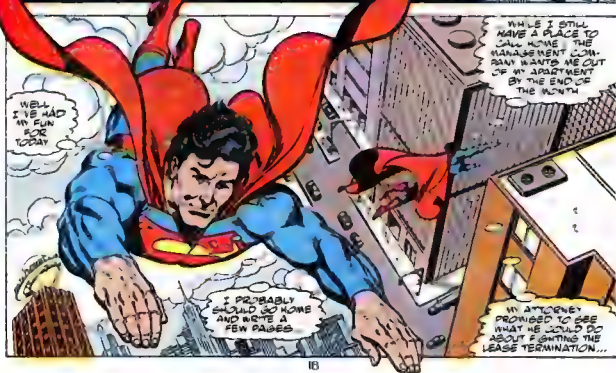
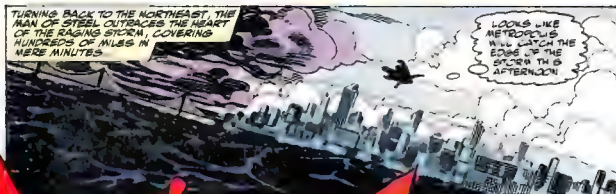
...and was killed for his efforts.

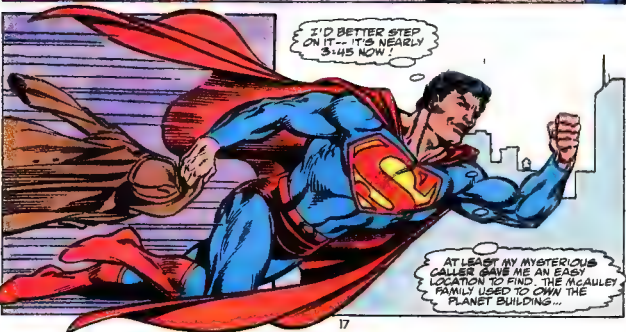
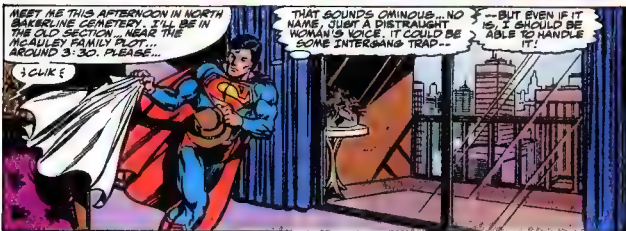


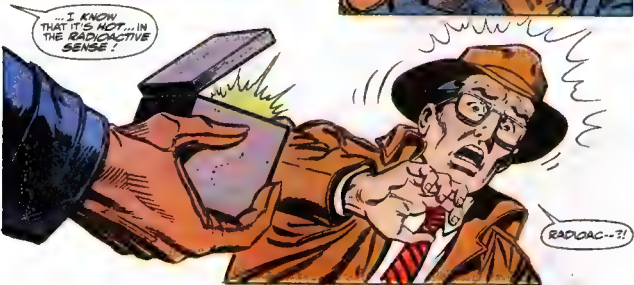
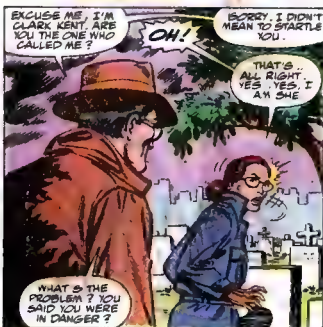
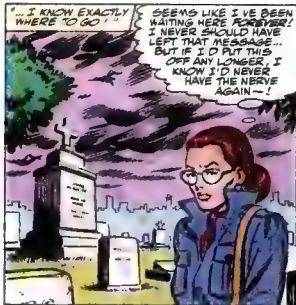
I'M SORRY, MATT... SO SORRY.

I'VE FINALLY FOUND A MEANS OF PROVING KENT'S SECRET... I BROKE THE LAW TO ACQUIRE IT, BUT THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO MATTER ANYMORE.

THIS IS FOR BOTH OF US NOW. YOUR DEATH MUST NOT HAVE BEEN IN VAIN!

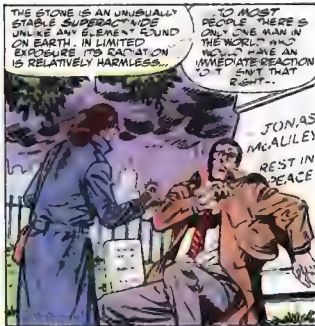








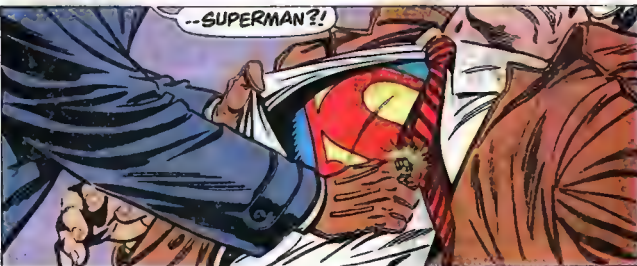
AS YOU CAN SEE IT'S A RING... RATHER LARGE FOR ME - IT WAS EVIDENTLY MADE FOR A MAN'S FINGER



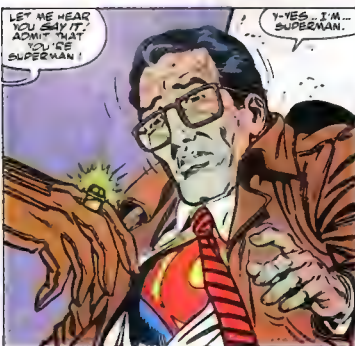
THE STONE IS AN UNUSUALLY STABLE SUPERACTIVELY UNLIKE ANY ELEMENT FOUND ON EARTH. IN LIMITED EXPOSURE ITS RADIATION IS RELATIVELY HARMLESS...

TO MOST PEOPLE THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN IN THE WORLD WHO WOULDN'T HAVE AN IMMEDIATE REACTION TO IT SAY THAT RIGHT...

JONAS MCALLEY REST IN PEACE

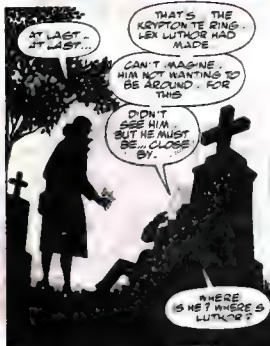


--SUPERMAN?!



LET ME HEAR YOU SAY IT, ADMIT THAT YOU'RE SUPERMAN!

Y-YES... I'M... SUPERMAN...



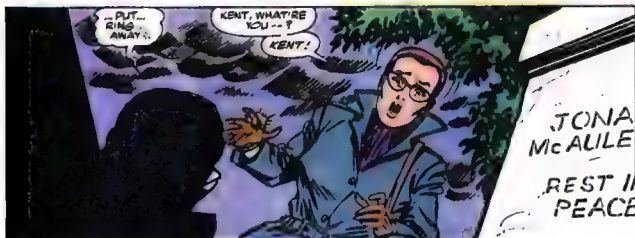
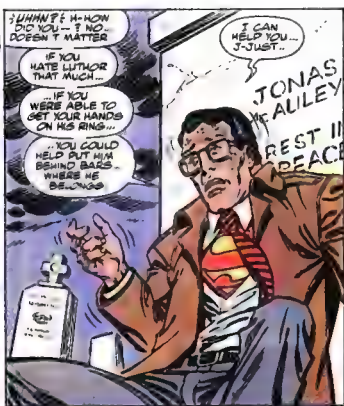
AT LAST - AT LAST...

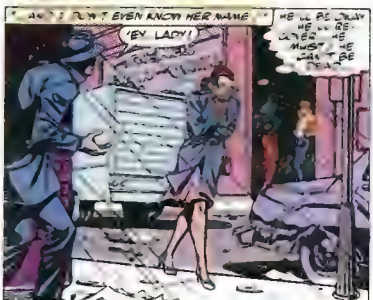
THAT'S THE KRYPTONITE RING LEX LUTHOR HAD MADE

CAN'T IMAGINE HIM NOT WANTING TO BE AROUND FOR THIS

DIDN'T SEE HIM, BUT HE MUST BE... CLOSE BY...

WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S LUTHOR?







RE:ACTION

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L-5633

Since this column was bumped from ACTION #650, we're focusing on your reactions to ACTION COMICS #648 and #649 this month, in an effort to catch up...

Dear Mike:

I thoroughly enjoyed ACTION COMICS #648. The art was excellent, varying from the dynamic (page 11) to the subtle (the final panel on page 8).

The story, too, was first class, with Superman playing only a supporting role in the Brainiac/Luthor story line. Although I'm sure the Man of Steel will have a more prominent part to play as the plot progresses, for now I'm happy to see the spotlight squarely on Lex and Brainiac.

We usually only see villains battling heroes, but it makes perfect sense for two such powerful and ambitious beings as Luthor and Brainiac to come into conflict.

For me, the bottom line with a comic is that it makes me want to buy the next issue. My verdict on ACTION #648...? See you in a month!

M.W. Simcox
84 Barnett Lane
Wordsley, Stourbridge
West Midlands, DY8 5PX
England

Dear Stern, Pérez, Gammill, and Breeding:

What was the best part of ACTION #648?

The four-page story of Metallo's life was pretty nice, but not the highlight of the book...

The spectacular art, namely Metallo's body? I, myself, realize it must be pretty difficult to draw robots—maybe not for you guys, but for me, it's pretty tough. No, the art was, as usual, superb, but not the greatest part of ACTION #648...

How about that eerie, floating Brainiac head? Or the beautiful panel on page 18 with Metallo's human facade torn half away? Or the end, setting us all up for a fitting end (one hopes) to Lex Luthor? None of the above...

The best part of the entire book was Supes's "I'm disarming you" crack! BWAH-HA-HA-HAI! I thought he lost his old sense of humor in fighting situations, but that joke had a JUSTICE LEAGUE flair... I hope we'll see more of this type of thing in the future!

Silver Streak
No Address Given

Dear Mike and Company:

I am impressed by "The Brainiac Trilogy," most notably the current installment (ACTION #648). The cover was excellent, as was the art. Metallo is a great villain, so I'm real glad that you brought him back. The laser effect on him (page 5) was well worth the price of admission! All this, and the Guardian, too. Please—keep up the good work!

Michael Garner
Box #20959
Long Beach, CA 90801

Hey, Mike:

I'd always heard the old adage that "three's a crowd," but, after seeing ACTION COMICS #648, I do not believe it anymore—not as far as comics go, at least.

"Body and Mind" had a good, solid story behind it, but came close to being totally obscured by the great visuals. Pérez, Gammill, and Breeding really turned it loose this time around and the results were nothing less than spectacular. I haven't seen a robot as visually menacing as Metallo since the Terminator lumbered through a few years back, and Roger's tribute to "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" on pages 20 and 21 (in both actions and dialogue) was appreciated.

Lookin' forward to next issue's concluding chapter.

Uncle Elvis
17650 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

RE-ACTION REPLIES: Peter T. Chattaway of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, has been totally captivated by Maxima and adds, "I hope you're not going to forget her!" Of course not, Peter—was Maxima's return in ACTION #650 and 651 soon enough for you? Greg Gannon of Woodlyn, PA, and Jeremy Richards of Fairbanks, AL, both put us in the hot seat this month by opposing the visualization of Superman's heat vision in #648. They prefer Superman's eyes glowing red rather than seeing the heat-vision beams. The beams in ACTION #648, Greg and Jeremy, were the interpretations of our artists, and frankly, if one of our talented illustrators comes up with yet another way to convey the Man of Steel's heat vision, we'll probably use that, too. From New Westminster,

British Columbia, comes a plea from Templeton A. Pierce for the return of Toyman, Bloodsport, and Bizarro. No plans for Bloodsport, but you'll probably see the Toyman again one of these days. Who's Bizarro? The aforementioned Mr. Pierce also asks for a new Krypto, while Charles D. Brown of Brentwood, NY, petitions us for a re-created Galactico Golem, and Fernando Ruiz, Jr. of North Arlington, NJ, wants the new Brainiac paired with a pet, Koko the space monkey. Uh ... guys, don't hold your breath for those three...! And finally, David Salmon Ornelas, Jr. of Albuquerque, NM, commends George Pérez for being an inspiration to young Latinos and asserts, "Working at a child care center at a time when Batmania is running amok, I can honestly say that Superman will be alive and well in the next generation, primarily because of your [our creative teams'] representations of our old friend." Thanks for the support, David!

Dear Editor:

Re: ACTION COMICS #649

Can a messy rebirth of an emaciated body be nice? Or what about a megaton explosion toward which the action in this month's issue progresses? Full of science fiction and psionics, a wayward alien to jeer at, and a stouthearted hero to pull for, Stern, Pérez, Gammill, and Breeding's wrap-up to "The Brainiac Trilogy" gives hope of more and even nastier close encounters to come.

"Man and Machine" moves rather tentatively, yet smoothly, to its climax, but forget that—I'm ready for Vril Dox's next tussle with Superman.

Howard T. Kidd
Manilla, IA

Dear ACTION Team:

"The Brainiac Trilogy" was absolutely beautiful. My commendations go out to those deservingly involved:

Stern, you outdid yourself on Brainiac's re-origin—that is, returning him to his everlovin' green self. While I may not have been an expert on his first origin, I at least knew he was a pretty smart green alien with a dislike for the guy in red, yellow, and blue tights. Once again, Stern, your writin' skills have never let me down.

Pérez, Gammill, and Breeding, your art was beautiful. As far as I can tell, Breeding inks—safe bet there. But does that leave the remaining as Pérez—breakdowns and Gammill—finished

pencils! Please explain. Also, for the same effect, why not just Gammill and Janke or Pérez and Breeding?

Oakley and Whitmore, the unsung heroes of every mag. From one who knows, thank you for your thankless work.

Peterson and Carlin, thank for makin' sure we get the best possible for our hard-earned cash. And, to all those not mentioned—thank you. Good night to all and to all a good night...

Joe Murray
1690 Whitwood Lane #2
Campbell, CA 95008

Pretty good guessing on the duties of ACTION's triple-threat artistic team, Joe, although George does small "thumbnails" for design, pacing, and story-telling, then Kerry does the actual breakdowns at standard size, using the thumbnails as a guide, leaving Brett to "finish" the art in reproducible black ink.

Dear Mike:

The ending of "The Brainiac Trilogy" was neat and necessary. You had to end with Brainiac somehow being restored to his former glory, yet he also had to be relatively undefeated for his next intrusion on Superman's peace and tranquility. The shape of his spaceship was a nice homage to the crazy '60s, simultaneously avoiding the need to shed the more "realistic" attitudes prevalent in today's comics. It goes to show that you can capture the spirit of those bygone days without losing the relevance demanded by today's audience; it's why I'm just one of many who have commented that the Superman books are fun to read again.

The quick visit to Clark's new job was eye-opening. After reading SUPERMAN #39, I thought Clark had flipped again. Now it seems his new job may indeed be a logical step for him, although I'd bet he'll end up back at the Planet. And wherever he is, his friends are as much a part of this book as he is—their depth, in fact, is the prime reason the book reads so well.

While Supes was asking himself that long series of questions at the beginning, I was expecting him to don a blue cowl and cape any second. Isn't the new WORLD'S FINEST due out soon?

Can recombinant DNA work quickly enough to modify an already existing body? You'd have to grow one from scratch to effect such a change. Is Mara Talbot yet another woman to have her heart broken by Clark? If they ever make "Superman V," it could be subtitled "When Clark Met Lois, Lana, Cat, Mara..."

Malcolm Bourne
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Prestwich, Manchester
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WORLD'S FINEST, the Prestige Format Superman/Batman mini-series by writer Dave Gibbons, penciller Steve Rude, inker Karl Kesel, and color artist Steve Oliff is still in production (it's a labor of love, believe us...) and it will be out later this year!

Dear Mike:

With ACTION #649, we come to quite a thunderous finale to "The Brainiac Trilogy." Now, as he was before the Crisis, Brainiac is perhaps Superman's greatest foe, since his weapons against our favorite Kryptonian are deep within Superman himself. Delusions, fears, doubts—these are evils we all deal with every day, and not even Superman can defeat them easily.

I was puzzled by a few things in this issue's story, most of all Superman's reaction to the green skin of the new and improved Brainiac. I'd always thought that all Coluans had green skin, has he never seen any other Coluans, and was that why he was taken aback? Or is it just the Dokes who are green? That's what I like about the DC Universe—a new puzzle every day.

I also approve of the return of the death's head spaceship. That was too good an image not to use again.

As for Clark's acceptance of the position at "Newstime," a decision he feels was only "logical" ... well, I'm sure he'll discover that the heart often knows better than the mind, and he'll return to the Daily Planet very soon.

A Super-Race 'tween Flash and Superman?

Ten bucks on Flash—any takers? (In Canadian Tire money, that is.)

Sean Twist
8-290 Springbank Drive
London, Ontario

Sean, as you saw by the outcome of ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #463's race between the Man of Steel and the Scarlet Speedster, you put your money in the right place!

Dear Mike:

The latest chapter in the ongoing saga of Superman and the concluding chapter of the origin of Brainiac in ACTION COMICS #649 merits the highest accolade from this delighted Superman fan. "Man and Machine" was evidence of a dedicated creative team perfectly in tune with each other, something few, if any other comics can boast. What makes ACTION even more praiseworthy is the unusually large number of people involved in the telling of the Man of Steel's adventures, not something that ordinarily facilitates fine storytelling. Once again, I am forced to say, "Congratulations! You've done it again!"

The visual conceptualization of the new Brainiac is a wonderful compromise between the old and the desire to be original. As someone who mourned the loss of the green-skinned android Brainiac in his revamp in issue #544 of ACTION, I can declare myself more than satisfied with the end product of Vril Doks's labors. Of course, we have yet to see what kind of costume Brainiac will choose to wear, but I am enthusiastic that our Superman artists will design appropriate garb. I can hardly wait to see it! (In other words, don't keep us waiting long for the return of Brainiac!) Oh, and keeping the death's head design for

Dox's spacecraft was the final stroke of brilliance, needless to say.

The diversity of the regular cast of characters in the Superman saga was shown to great effect in the telling of this chapter. We were given glimpses of the potential still to be tapped in the likes of Luthor (whose ineffectiveness in this story will surely fuel his ire and spell danger for Kal-El in the near future), the Cadmus Project, and Clark's new working environment (though how permanent the latter will prove to be, I just wonder. After all, I'm beginning to suspect Clark's move to "Newstime" may be more the result of the mental stresses he has been suffering than any deliberate desire on his part to make a positive career move.). I look forward to developments, of course.

Last, but definitely NOT least, a word on the art of Pérez, Gammill, and Breeding: Exceptional. And another ... Beautiful. And one more ... Delightful.

Dale Coe
56 Whitecross Road
Warrington, Cheshire
WA5 1LR England

And thanks for your exceptional, beautiful, and delightful letter, Dale!

—Michael Eury

NEXT MONTH IS BATMAN MONTH IN THE SUPERMAN LINE OF BOOKS! TELL YOUR FRIENDS!



First, in SUPERMAN #44, in just two weeks, "Dark Knight Over Metropolis" Part One kicks off one of the Man of Steel's more unusual adventures ... taking him from the depths of Suicide Slum to the heights of one of Lex Luthor's black tie affairs. Jerry Ordway and Dennis Janke write and draw this chapter.

Then, in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #467, in three weeks, "Dark Knight Over Metropolis" Part Two continues the unorthodox teaming of two of our world's finest heroes! Dan Jurgens and Art Thibert write and draw chapter two.

And, finally, in ACTION COMICS #654, one month from now, "Dark Knight Over Metropolis" Part Three brings Gangbuster firmly into the mix, as Batman and Superman make their uneasy alliance work! Superman even visits the Bat-Cave for the first time! Roger Stern, Bob McLeod, and Brett Breeding write and draw this milestone series to its close!

ONCE AGAIN: NEXT MONTH IS BATMAN MONTH IN SUPERMAN'S LINE OF BOOKS! TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS!



“...AND SCANNING FOR ALL!”

BeastCharming:
Not quite Big Blue,
but he's halfway there!

